

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 IO-14 DPW-01 DRC-01 /125 W

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P R 191115Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9558

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 4866

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, LA

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF SITUATION WITH SECSTATE OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS

1. THIS MORNING I CALLED ON TIANETHONE CHANTHARASY,
SECRETARY OF STATE, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHO HAD
ONLY FEW DAYS EARLIER RETURNED FROM NEW DELHI WHERE HE HAD
BEEN AMBASSADOR. I HAVE KNOWN TIANETHONE FIRST IN 58/59
IN VIENTIANE AND THEN IN 60/61 IN WASHINGTON. HE IS UN-
DOUBTEDLY ONE OF THE ABLE, MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND MORE
LEVEL-HEADED MEMBERS OF HIS GENERATION IN THIS COUNTRY,
SO THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO SPEAK TO HIM WITH A DEGREE OF
VIGOR AND PRECISION THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO DO WITH OTHER
LAO AND THAT IS YET FULLY UNDERSTOOD. HE IS ALSO CLOSE
TO SOUVANNA. I TOLD HIM THAT I WANTED TO REVIEW WITH
HIM THE SITUATION IN LAOS AS WE SAW IT AND TO BRING TO
HIS ATTENTION A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC MATTERS THAT WERE OF
DEEP CONCERN TO WASHINGTON.

2. I WENT OVER PRETTY WELL THE SAME GROUND THAT I HAVE
COVERED WITH OTHER VIENTIANE SIDE LEADERS. I TOLD HIM
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THAT OVERALL WE HAD IMPRESSION THAT PATHET LAO CONTINUED

TO MAINTAIN INITIATIVE IN ALL JOINT BODIES AND AT ALL LEVELS. THE GOVERNMENT HAD ADOPTED PHOUMI'S 10 POINT PROGRAM OF PROCEDURE, THE NATIONAL COUNCIL HAD ADOPTED SOUPHANOUVONG'S 18 POINT POLITICAL PROGRAM, AND THE JOINT COMMITTEE PRETTY WELL FOLLOWED PATHET LAO LEAD. WE HAD HEARD THAT PATHET LAO POLICE UNILATERALLY CHECKED IDENTITY CARDS AND SEARCHED AREAS, CONTRARY TO PROVISIONS OF AGREEMENT WHICH REQUIRE JOINT DECISIONS AND JOINT PATROLS. WE HAD ALSO HEARD OF PATHET LAO ACTIVELY WORKING AMONG STUDENTS TO PRESENT PATHET LAO VIEWS. IN CONTRAST WE HAD IMPRESSION OF A DEGREE OF DEMORALIZATION ON VIENTIANE SIDE. YET WE FELT VIENTIANE SIDE HAD REAL ASSETS: NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, RICHER AREAS OF COUNTRY AND MOST EDUCATED HUMAN RESOURCES. PATHET LAO HAD REAL WEAKNESSES, NOTABLY THEIR DEPENDENCE ON VIETNAMESE EXEMPLIFIED BY CONTINUED PRESENCE OF NVA IN LAOS. PROBLEM WAS ONE OF CONFIDENCE AND TAKING INITIATIVES WHICH WOULD PLACE PATHET LAO ON DEFENSIVE - E.G., PROPOSING NATION-WIDE PROGRAMS IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, ETC. TIANETHONE READILY ASSENTED, BUT ONLY COMMENTED THAT WE SHOULD NOT "DESPAIR"; WE WOULD SEE VIENTIANE SIDE GETTING ORGANIZED. HE HIMSELF REMAINED OPTIMISTIC.

3. WITH REGARD TO SPECIFIC POINTS, I FIRST CITED DRV NOTE REQUESTING RECOGNITION OF THE PRG. I MENTIONED THAT AMBASSADOR HAD MADE REPRESENTATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER SOME 10 DAYS AGO BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE BUT I WANTED TO REAFFIRM TO HIM THE IMPORTANCE WHICH WASHINGTON ATTACHED TO RECOGNITION ISSUE OF PRG AND GRUNK. I SAID THAT RECOGNITION OF THESE TWO MOVEMENTS WOULD PRESUMABLY RESULT IN A CHANGED POSITION IN VOTING IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES WHICH COULD HAVE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES SINCE VOTE ON GRUNK IN PARTICULAR HAD BEEN VERY, VERY CLOSE. WASHINGTON WAS CONCERNED BY IMPACT THIS ISSUE COULD HAVE ON WHOLE OF UN SYSTEM. FOR INSTANCE, IF DESPITE UNGA VOTE TO MAINTAIN ITS RECOGNITION OF THE PHNOM PENH GOVERNMENT, THE ISSUE OF CREDENTIALS HAD TO BE DEBATED AT LENGTH AT EACH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND IF ONE CONFERENCE OVERCONFIDENTIAL

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TURNED THE CREDENTIALS OF THE GKR IN FAVOR OF THE GRUNK, THIS WOULD RAISE MOST SERIOUS QUESTIONS REGARDING ORDERLY PROCESS WITHIN UN SYSTEM. (IN THIS CONNECTION I MENTIONED LOS CONFERENCE AND IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO IT.) SECONDLY, RECOGNITION OF PRG AND/OR GRUNK WOULD ALSO RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE CONTINUING NEUTRALITY OF THE PGNU SINCE NO TRULY NEUTRAL GOVERNMENT ANYWHERE AND NO ASIAN

GOVERNMENT, EXCEPT COMMUNISTS, RECOGNIZED THESE TWO MOVEMENTS. THIRDLY, RECOGNITION OF PRG WOULD UNDERMINE IMPLEMENTATION OF PARIS AGREEMENT AND, RECOGNITION OF GRUNK WOULD UNDERMINE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA WHICH WAS US GOAL. FINALLY, AND I SAID I WAS MAKING THIS POINT TO HIM BECAUSE HE KNEW WASHINGTON AND IT WAS IN NO WAY INTENDED AS A THREAT, RECOGNITION OF THESE TWO MOVEMENTS WOULD BE A FACTOR IN THE CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE ON AID, AND CERTAINLY STRENGTHEN THE GROWING CRITICISM OF ALL FOREIGN AID. AT A TIME WHEN CONGRESS WAS ASKED TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HUGE AMOUNTS FOR VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS, SUCH AN ACTION BY PGNU WOULD BE CITED AS FURTHER EXAMPLE OF USELESSNESS OF AID.

4. TIANETHONE TOOK NOTES OF THESE POINTS AND SAID THAT HE WOULD MAKE THEM TO THE PRIME MINISTER BEFORE THE CABINET MEETING THIS AFTERNOON.

5. THE OTHER SPECIFIC POINT OF CONCERN I BROUGHT TO TIANETHONE'S ATTENTION WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF PRESS CENSORSHIP. I RECALLED THE CHAPTER OF THE REGULATIONS ON DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR CENSORSHIP AND MENTIONED THE REPORTS WE HAD RECEIVED FROM AMERICAN NEWSMEN AS WELL AS FROM LAO FRIENDS OF THE ONGOING STRUGGLE WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION. I TOLD HIM THAT THE MATTER HAD ALREADY BEEN REPORTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS INSTITUTE AND THAT IF INDEED CENSORSHIP WERE INSTITUTED, SUCH AN ACTION, AS HE KNEW VERY WELL, WOULD RECEIVE WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY. IT WOULD ALSO RAISE QUESTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE REALITY OF THE PGNU'S NEUTRALITY AND ITS ENDORSEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS.

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6. HE ALSO MADE NOTE OF THIS POINT BUT NO COMMENTS. HE DID HOWEVER SAY THAT HE WAS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE OF FOUR NAMED BY CABINET TO STUDY POLITICAL PROGRAM AND THESE REGULATIONS. COMMITTEE HAD DISCUSSED PROCEDURE BUT NOT YET SUBSTANCE. HE WAS CLEARLY RELUCTANT TO SPEAK ANY FURTHER ON THIS MATTER AND I DID NOT PRESS HIM.

7. I HAVE APPOINTMENT TO SEE PRIME MINISTER AT 11:00 AM TOMORROW TO MAKE TOUR D'HORIZON.

CHAPMAN

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NNN

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